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FORTY-SEVENTH SESSION

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SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 1st MEETING

Chairman: Mr. GANEV
(President of the General Assembly)

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ORGANIZATION OF THE FORTY-SEVENTH REGULAR SESSION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY, ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA AND ALLOCATION OF ITEMS: MEMORANDUM BY THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

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The meeting was called to order at 10.20 a.m.

ORGANIZATION OF THE FORTY-SEVENTH REGULAR SESSION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY, ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA AND ALLOCATION OF ITEMS: MEMORANDUM BY THE SECRETARY-GENERAL (A/BUR/47/1)

Section I. Introduction

1. The Committee decided to draw the General Assembly's attention to the provisions reproduced in annexes V, VI, VII, and VIII of its rules of procedure.

Section II. Organization of the session

Paragraph 4 (General Committee)

2. The Committee took note of paragraph 4 of the Secretary-General's memorandum.

Paragraphs 5 to 8 (Rationalization of work)

3. The Committee took note of paragraphs 5 and 6 of the Secretary-General's memorandum and decided to draw the General Assembly's attention to paragraph 5 of the annex to its resolution 45/45 and to paragraph 8 of the Secretary-General's memorandum; it also decided to recommend that the holding of concurrent meetings of the Special Political Committee and the Fourth Committee should be avoided.

Paragraph 9 (Closing date of the session)

4. The Committee decided to recommend to the General Assembly that the Assembly should recess no later than 18 December 1992 and close on 20 September 1993.

Paragraphs 10 to 12 (Schedule of meetings)

5. The Committee decided to recommend to the General Assembly that morning meetings should start at 10 a.m. for all plenary meetings and meetings of the Main Committees. The Committee also decided to recommend that, in order to avoid the late start of meetings, the General Assembly should waive the quorum requirements for plenary meetings and meetings of the Main Committees, on the understanding that such a waiver would not imply any permanent change in the provisions of rules 67 and 108 of the rules of procedure pertaining to the opening of meetings.

6. The Committee further decided to recommend that delegations should be reminded of the utmost importance of punctuality in the interest of ensuring an effective and orderly organization of work and achieving economies for the United Nations.

Paragraphs 13 to 15 (General debate)

7. The Committee endorsed the suggestions contained in paragraphs 13 and 14 of the Secretary-General's memorandum.

8. The CHAIRMAN urged representatives, in view of the large number of delegations already inscribed on the list of speakers for the general debate in the General Assembly, to speak in the order in which they were listed. Those unable to speak at the scheduled time would be put at the end of the list for the same day.

9. The Committee decided to draw the General Assembly's attention to paragraph 15 and to recommend that the provision prohibiting the practice of expressing congratulations inside the Assembly Hall itself should apply during the forty-seventh session. In that connection, it also decided to recommend to the General Assembly that speakers in the general debate should be asked to exit the Assembly Hall through room GA-200, located behind the podium, before returning to their seats.

Paragraphs 16 to 18 (Explanations of vote, right of reply, points of order and length of statements)

10. The Committee decided to draw the General Assembly's attention to paragraphs 6, 7 and 8 of its decision 34/401 and to rules 72 and 114 of the rules of procedure and paragraph 22 of annex VI thereto, for appropriate action to be taken by the Assembly in plenary meeting and by the Main Committees. It further decided to recommend to the General Assembly that points of order should be limited to five minutes.

Paragraph 19 (Records of meetings)

11. The Committee decided to recommend that the General Assembly should adopt the suggestions contained in paragraph 19 of the Secretary-General's memorandum. It futher decided to recommend to the Assembly that its decision not to reproduce in extenso statements made in a Main Committee should be maintained for the forty-seventh session.

Paragraph 21 (Concluding statements)

12. The Committee decided to draw the General Assembly's attention to the need for full implementation of paragraph 17 of decision 34/401.

Paragraphs 22 to 24 (Resolutions)

13. The Committee decided to draw the General Assembly's attention to paragraph 32 of its decision 34/401, to recommendation 3 (f) of the Group of High-level Intergovernmental Experts, and to paragraphs 1 and 10 of the annex to its resolution 45/45.

Paragraphs 25 to 28 (Questions related to the programme budget)

14. The Committee decided to draw the General Assembly's attention to the provisions reproduced in paragraphs 25 and 26 and the observations contained in paragraphs 27 and 28 of the Secretary-General's memorandum.

Paragraphs 29 and 30 (Documentation)

15. The Committee decided to draw the General Assembly's attention to paragraph 28 of its decision 34/401; it also took note of the recommendation in paragraph 30 of the Secretary-General's memorandum.

Paragraphs 31 and 32 (Observances and commemorative meetings)

16. The Committee endorsed the suggestions contained in paragraphs 31 and 32 of the Secretary-General's memorandum.

Paragraphs 33 and 34 (Special conferences)

17. The Committee decided to draw the General Assembly's attention to the recommendations referred to in paragraphs 33 and 34 of the Secretary-General's memorandum.

Paragraph 35 (Meetings of subsidiary organs)

18. The CHAIRMAN recalled that the General Assembly had already taken action on the request by the Chairman of the Committee on Conferences concerning the Committee for Programme and Coordination.

19. The Committee decided to recommend that the General Assembly should authorize the remaining eight subsidiary organs of the Assembly referred to in paragraph 35 of the Secretary-General's memorandum to meet during the forty-seventh session.

Section III. Observations and proposals on the organization of future sessions of the General Assembly

Paragraphs 36 and 37

20. The Committee took note of paragraphs 36 and 37.

Paragraph 39 (Programme of work of the General Assembly)

21. The Committee endorsed the suggestion contained in paragraph 39 of the Secretary-General's memorandum.

Paragraphs 40 and 41 (Main Committees)

22. The Committee endorsed the suggestions contained in paragraphs 40 and 41 of the Secretary-General's memorandum.

Section IV. Adoption of the agenda

23. The CHAIRMAN said that, in accordance with rule 40 of the rules of procedure, the Committee would not consider the substance of any item except in so far as it bore on the question of whether or not to recommend the inclusion of that item in the agenda.

24. He also drew the Committee's attention to the suggestions in paragraph 43 of the Secretary-General's memorandum, and in particular the suggestion that the agenda of the General Assembly should be simplified by grouping or merging, to the extent possible, related items, and, where it was appropriate for the discussion of a particular item, by setting an interval of more than a year between discussions of it.

25. The Committee decided to recommend that the General Assembly should direct its main committees to review their agenda with a view to streamlining their programme of work as suggested in paragraph 43 of the Secretary-General's memorandum.

Inclusion of items

Items 1 to 6

26. The CHAIRMAN said that items 1 to 6 had already been dealt with; he would therefore take it that there were no comments on their inclusion in the agenda.

Items 7 to 22

27. The Committee decided to recommend that the General Assembly should include items 7 to 22 in the agenda.

Item 23

28. Mr. MERIMEE (France) expressed regret that the General Committee must once again consider the inclusion of the agenda item relating to Mayotte. The question of Mayotte was an internal one and was regularly reviewed by the French and Comorian authorities; any discussion thereof by the General Assembly would constitute a violation of Article 2, paragraph 7, of the Charter of the United Nations.

29. Mr. MOUMIN (Comoros) said that the sovereignty of the Islamic Federal Republic of the Comoros over the Comorian island of Mayotte had been reaffirmed by resolutions adopted by, among other bodies, the United Nations, the Organization of African Unity and the Non-Aligned Movement calling on the Government of France to agree to negotiations on the issue. Despite the support for the Comoros' claim shown by the international community, France maintained its opposition. He called on the representative of France to ask his Government to respect the territorial integrity of the Islamic Federal Republic of the Comoros, and asked the Committee to include the question of the Comorian island of Mayotte in the agenda of the General Assembly.

30. The Committee decided to recommend that the General Assembly should include item 28 in the agenda.

Items 24 to 37

31. Mr. GHAFOORZAI (Afghanistan), speaking on item 28, said that the Government of the Islamic State of Afghanistan, which was devoting all its efforts and energy to rebuilding the country, was now turning to the international community for assistance in those efforts. To that end, his Government had proposed the inclusion of a supplementary item entitled "Emergency international assistance for the reconstruction of war-stricken Afghanistan".

32. In view of the substantial changes in the country, which had culminated in the establishment of an Islamic State on 29 April 1992, it had been the view of the Government that perhaps the new item should replace item 28; however, such recent developments as the continuous rocket attacks on Kabul, the capital, had caused it to conclude that it might be in the interests of the future peace, stability and security of Afghanistan for the original item to be retained on the agenda but not discussed.

33. His Government expressed the hope that circumstances would not call for that item to remain on the agenda of the General Assembly.

34. The Committee decided to recommend that the General Assembly should include items 24 to 37 in the agenda.

Items 38 to 76

35. The Committee decided to recommend that the General Assembly should include items 38 to 76 in the agenda.

Item 77

36. Mr. MOUMIN (Comoros), supported by Mr. HAYES (Ireland), said that, after consultation with the representatives of France and Madagascar, his delegation wished to recommend that consideration of item 77, the question of the Malagasy islands of Glorieuses, Juan de Nova, Europa and Bassas da India, should be deferred until the forty-eighth session of the General Assembly, without prejudice to any arrangements the two countries might arrive at in that regard.

37. The Committee decided to recommend that consideration of the item should be deferred to the forty-eighth session of the General Assembly and included in the provisional agenda of that session.

Items 79 to 99

38. The Committee decided to recommend that the General Assembly should include items 79 to 99 in the agenda.

Item 100

39. Mr. WOOD (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland), speaking on behalf of the European Community, said he wished to place on record its position on item 100 of the provisional agenda. It was entirely appropriate for the General Assembly to discuss the situation in South Africa, but, as his delegation had repeatedly stated in the Fourth Committee itself, such discussion should not take place in that Committee, for the reasons given in the President's statement in the Fourth Committee during the forty-sixth session of the General Assembly.

40. The Committee decided to recommend that the General Assembly should include item 100 in the agenda.

Items 101 and 102

41. The Committee decided to recommend that the General Assembly should include items 101 and 102 in the agenda.

Item 103

42. Mr. HAYES (Ireland) drew attention to the Secretary-General's progress report on the question of East Timor (document A/47/435), in which he expressed his view that the renewal of talks between the Governments of Portugal and Indonesia gave hope of substantial progress towards a solution to that question.

43. In view of the fact that the Foreign Ministers of Portugal and Indonesia had been invited by the Secretary-General to hold formal negotiations under his auspices in New York, his delegation proposed that the General Committee should recommend to the General Assembly a deferment of item 103 until its forty-eighth session.

44. Mr. ALLAREY (Philippines) supported the proposal.

45. The Committee decided to recommend that consideration of item 103 should be deferred to the forty-eighth session of the General Assembly.

Items 104 to 140

46. The Committee decided to recommend that the General Assembly should include items 104 to 140 in the agenda.

Item 141

47. The PRESIDENT said that the representative of Latvia had asked to participate in the discussion of item 141 in accordance with rule 43 of the rules of procedure.

48. At the invitation of the President, Mr. Baumanis (Latvia) took a place at the Committee table.

49. Mr. BAUMANIS (Latvia), speaking on behalf of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania, referred the General Committee to a request submitted by the permanent mission of all three countries (document A/47/191) for the inclusion of a supplementary item in the agenda of the forty-seventh session of the General Assembly entitled "Complete withdrawal of foreign military forces from the territories of the Baltic States".

50. After regaining their independence, the three Baltic States had been admitted to the United Nations in 1991; one year later, foreign military forces were still stationed on their territory without their consent and, by their continued presence, constituted a threat to the maintenance of international peace and security. The Baltic Governments recognized the efforts of all parties, including the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe to negotiate complete withdrawal of those forces, but in view of the lack of success of those negotiations wished to raise the issue at the United Nations so that preventive diplomacy could be applied in an area where international peace and security might be threatened. Accordingly, the missions of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania suggested that the draft agenda item 141 should be referred to the plenary Assembly.

51. The Committee decided to recommend that the General Assembly should include item 141 in the agenda.

Item 142

52. The CHAIRMAN said that the inclusion of item 142 had been requested by Czechoslovakia in document A/47/192.

53. The Committee decided to recommend that the General Assembly should include item 142 in the agenda.

Item 143

54. Mr. GHAFOORZAI (Afghanistan) said that the forty-seventh session of the General Assembly was of special significance to Afghanistan since it marked its first participation after the 14-year war of liberation, which had led to the restoration of the country's sovereignty, political integrity and independence. The assistance of the world community would be vital to the economic reconstruction and social rehabilitation of Afghanistan, following the ravages of the war. In his appeal for humanitarian assistance for Afghanistan, the Secretary-General had drawn attention to the terrible destruction inflicted on Afghanistan and the need for urgent assistance from the international community. Under rule 14 of the rules of procedure, Afghanistan had requested inclusion of the item by its letter contained in document A/47/193. In accordance with rule 20 of the rules of procedure, an explanatory memorandum had been annexed to that letter. Originally, Afghanistan had wanted the item to be considered in plenary meeting but, in

(Mr. Ghafoorzai, Afghanistan)

the light of technical considerations, it would agree to its consideration by the Second Committee.

55. The Committee decided to recommend that the General Assembly should include item 143 in the agenda.

Item 144

56. The Committee decided to recommend that the General Assembly should include item 144 in the agenda.

Item 145

57. The Committee decided to recommend that the General Assembly should include item 145 in the agenda.

Item 146

58. The CHAIRMAN said that the inclusion of item 146 had been requested by Croatia in document A/47/242.

59. The Committee decided to recommend that the General Assembly should include item 146 in the agenda.

Section V. Allocation of items

Paragraph 45

60. The Committee decided to draw the General Assembly's attention to paragraph 4 of its decision 34/401.

61. The CHAIRMAN noted that in paragraph 45, the Secretary-General drew the Committee's attention to paragraph 5 of the annex to General Assembly resolution 39/88 B, which recommended that the Chairmen of the Main Committees should take the initiative, in the light of past experience, to propose the grouping of similar or related items on the holding of a single general debate on them, and to paragraph 6 of the annex to General Assembly resolution 45/45, which recommended that the General Committee, in making recommendations as to how agenda items should be allocated to the Main Committees and the plenary of the General Assembly, should ensure the best use of the expertise of the Committees.

Paragraph 46

62. The CHAIRMAN drew the Committee's attention to six items of the draft agenda which had not been considered previously by the General Assembly. He invited the Committee to consider the recommendations it should make regarding the allocation of those items.

(The Chairman)

63. He said that the sponsors of items 140, 141 and 142 had proposed that those items should be considered directly in plenary meeting.

64. The Committee decided to recommend to the General Assembly that items 140, 141 and 142 should be considered directly in plenary meeting.

65. The CHAIRMAN said that the sponsor of item 143 had proposed that the item should be allocated to the Second Committee.

66. The Committee decided to recommend to the General Assembly that item 143 should be allocated to the Second Committee.

67. The CHAIRMAN said that the sponsors of item 144 had proposed that the item should be allocated to the First Committee.

68. The Committee decided to recommend to the General Assembly that item 144 should be allocated to the First Committee.

69. The CHAIRMAN said that the sponsors of item 146 had proposed that the item should be allocated to the Second Committee.

70. The Committee decided to recommend to the General Assembly that item 146 should be allocated to the Second Committee.

Paragraph 47

71. The Committee decided to recommend that the General Assembly should adopt the proposals in paragraph 47 of the Secretary-General's memorandum, relating to item 12.

Paragraph 48

72. The Committee decided, with regard to item 18, to recommend to the General Assembly that all the chapters of the report of the Special Committee on the Situation with regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples relating to specific Territories should be referred to the Fourth Committee, thus enabling the Assembly to deal in plenary meeting with the question of the implementation of the Declaration as a whole.

Paragraph 49

73. The Committee decided to recommend that, in accordance with the procedure followed at previous sessions, item 33 should be considered directly in plenary meeting, on the understanding that the representatives of the Organization of African Unity and national liberation movements recognized by that organization would be permitted to participate in the discussion in plenary meeting, and that organizations and individuals having a special interest in the question would be permitted to be heard by the Special Political Committee.

Paragraph 50

74. The Committee decided to recommend that, as at previous sessions, the General Assembly should consider item 38 directly in plenary meeting, on the understanding that bodies and individuals having an interest in the question would be heard in the Fourth Committee in conjunction with the consideration of the item in plenary meeting.

Paragraph 51

75. The Committee decided to recommend to the General Assembly that item 45 should be allocated at an appropriate time during the session.

Paragraph 52

76. The Committee decided to recommend to the General Assembly that paragraphs of the report of the International Atomic Energy Agency dealing with the subject-matter of item 61 should be brought to the attention of the First Committee in connection with its consideration of that item.

Paragraph 53

77. The CHAIRMAN drew the Committee's attention to paragraph 14 of General Assembly resolution 46/96 of 16 December 1991, in which the General Assembly had decided to devote four plenary meetings at its forty-seventh session to mark, at the appropriate global level, the conclusion of the United Nations Decade of Disabled Persons.

78. The Committee decided to recommend to the General Assembly that the meetings to mark the conclusion of the United Nations Decade of Disabled Persons should be held on 12 and 13 October 1992.

Paragraph 54

79. The CHAIRMAN drew attention to paragraph 4 of resolution 46/91, in which the General Assembly had decided to devote four plenary meetings, or two working days, at its forty-seventh session to an international conference on ageing to consolidate a set of targets on ageing for the year 2001 and to celebrate on an appropriate global scale the tenth anniversary of the adoption of the International Plan of Action on Ageing.

80. The Committee decided to recommend to the General Assembly that the meetings to celebrate the tenth anniversary of the adoption of the International Plan of Action on Ageing should be held on 15 and 16 October 1992.

Paragraph 55

81. The Committee decided to recommend to the General Assembly that in accordance with paragraph 16 of the annex to its resolution 39/125, the annual report of the Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme on the operations, management and budget of the United Nations Development Fund for Women should be referred to the Second Committee for consideration under item 84.

Paragraph 56

82. The CHAIRMAN drew attention to paragraph 8 (c) of resolution 46/128 of 17 December 1991, in which the General Assembly had decided to conduct the opening ceremonies for the International Year for the World's Indigenous People at its forty-seventh session in 1992. In document A/47/447, Canada had suggested that the opening ceremonies should be held in the morning of 10 December 1992.

83. The Committee decided to recommend to the General Assembly that the opening ceremonies for the International Year for the World's Indigenous People should be held in plenary meeting on 10 December 1992, in the morning.

Paragraph 57

84. The Committee decided to recommend that, in accordance with the procedure followed at previous sessions, item 107 should be allocated to the Fifth Committee on the understanding that, in accordance with resolutions 36/228 A, 45/253 and 46/189, each programme of the proposed revisions to the medium-term plan should be submitted to the appropriate Main Committee of the General Assembly for review and that the views and recommendations of the Main Committees should be submitted to the Fifth Committee before 20 November 1992 so as to enable the Fifth Committee to finalize its recommendations to the plenary on the item.

Paragraph 58

85. The Committee decided to recommend to the General Assembly that item 111 should be allocated to the Fifth Committee on the understanding that the reports of the Joint Inspection Unit dealing with subject-matters assigned to other Main Committees would be referred also to those Committees.

Report of the Conference on Environment and Development

86. The CHAIRMAN drew attention to document A/47/423, in which the United Kingdom, on behalf of the European Community and its member States, had proposed that item 80 should be considered directly in plenary meeting, and to document A/47/439 in which the Permanent Representative of Pakistan stated that the Group of 77 concurred with the proposal from the European Community and its member States and considered that the item should be allocated for purposes of negotiation to the Second Committee.

87. Mr. WOOD (United Kingdom) said that, following informal consultations, the European Community and its member States withdrew their request for agenda item 80 to be considered in plenary, on the understanding that the debate on the item would be held in plenary in recognition of its importance and that negotiations on all issues arising from the item would take place in a special ad hoc working group of the Second Committee under the chairmanship of an agreed friend of the Chairman of the Second Committee, who, in view of the heavy workload of the Second Committee, should be chosen from outside the Bureau of the Second Committee and should have been actively involved with the negotiations regarding the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, particularly in the institutional field.

88. The Committee decided, in the light of the statement by the representative of the United Kingdom, that the debate on agenda item 80 should be held directly in plenary meeting on the understanding that action on the item would be taken by the Second Committee.

Paragraph 59

Items proposed for consideration in plenary meeting

89. The Committee decided to recommend to the General Assembly that the items proposed for consideration in plenary meeting in the Secretary-General's memorandum, including item 80, under subitem (a) of item 94, the observance of the conclusion of the United Nations Decade of Disabled Persons and the celebration of the tenth anniversary of the adoption of the International Plan of Action on Ageing and, under sub-item (b) of item 98, the opening ceremonies for the International Year for the World's Indigenous People including also items 140, 141 and 142, and excluding item 45, should be allocated to the plenary Assembly.

Items proposed for consideration by the First Committee

90. The Committee decided to recommend to the General Assembly that the items proposed for consideration by the First Committee in the Secretary-General's memorandum, including item 144, should be allocated to that Committee.

Items proposed for consideration by the Special Political Committee

91. Taking into account its decision on the item entitled "Question of the Malagasy islands of Glorieuses, Juan de Nova, Europa and Bassas da India", the Committee decided to recommend to the General Assembly that the items proposed for consideration by the Special Political Committee in the Secretary-General's memorandum should be allocated to that Committee.

Items proposed for consideration by the Second Committee

92. The Committee decided to recommend to the General Assembly that the items proposed for consideration by the Second Committee in the Secretary-General's memorandum should be allocated to that Committee.

Items proposed for consideration by the Third Committee

93. The Committee decided to recommend to the General Assembly that the items proposed for consideration by the Third Committee in the Secretary-General's memorandum should be allocated to that Committee.

Items proposed for consideration by the Fourth Committee

94. Taking into account its decision on the item entitled "Question of East Timor", the Committee decided to recommend to the General Assembly that the items proposed for consideration by the Fourth Committee in the Secretary-General's memorandum should be allocated to that Committee.

Items proposed for consideration by the Fifth Committee

95. The Committee decided to recommend to the General Assembly that the items proposed for consideration by the Fifth Committee in the Secretary-General's memorandum should be allocated to that Committee.

Items proposed for consideration by the Sixth Committee

96. The Committee decided to recommend to the General Assembly that the items proposed for consideration by the Sixth Committee in the Secretary-General's memorandum should be allocated to that Committee.

The meeting rose at 12.20 p.m.